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ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

**MEDICAL OFFICER
OF HEALTH**

AND

CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR

OF THE

**BOROUGH OF TAUNTON
FOR THE YEAR 1950**

Public Health Department,
St. Paul's House,
TAUNTON.
16th August, 1951.

The Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses,
THE BOROUGH OF TAUNTON.

Mr. Mayor, Madam and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit the annual report for 1950; as my period of office only dated from 1st November, the report is almost entirely statistical.

It would appear that, apart from the usual outbreak of measles, and some twelve cases of poliomyelitis, the health of the Borough remained good, the general death rate and the infantile mortality rate both being comparatively low.

I wish to express my appreciation of the help I received during the taking over period from Alderman West, J.P., the Chairman of the Public Health Committee, and also from my fellow officials and staff.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

LEO FAY.

Medical Officer of Health.

BOROUGH OF TAUNTON.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health, 1950.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area in acres	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,434
Population estimated by the Registrar General	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	34,710
Number of inhabited houses at the end of 1950 (according to the Rate Books	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	9,157
Rateable value at the end of 1950	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	£254,890
Estimated product of a penny rate	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	£1,012

VITAL STATISTICS.

Births, live legitimate	...	Male 360	Female 261	...	Total	621
Births, live illegitimate	...	Male 15	Female 6	...	Total	21
Births, still legitimate	...	Male 4	Female 5	...	Total	9
Births, still illegitimate	...	Male —	Female —	...	Total	—
Birth rate, total	...	...	...	...	...	18.7
live	...	...	...	...	...	18.4
still	...	...	...	...	...	0.2
illegitimate	...	...	...	...	...	0.6
Deaths, Male 207, Female 190	...	...	...	...	Total	397
Death rate, crude	...	...	...	...	...	11.4
Death rate (corrected by factor 0.96)	...	...	...	...	...	10.4
Deaths of infants under one year of age, Male 8, Female 6	...	...	...	...	Total	14
Infant Mortality Rate	...	...	...	...	...	21.8
Deaths from Diarrhoea under 2 years of age	...	...	...	...	...	1
Rate per 1,000 live births...	...	...	...	...	...	0.61

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT, 1948, SECTION 47.

One case was formally removed on the authority of the Magistrates.

WATER SUPPLY

No change occurred in the nature of the town supplies and it was not found necessary to impose any restrictions in use.

88 samples were taken during the year. In every single instance the bacteriological purity of the water was found to be of the highest standard.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Infectious Disease — 1950.

<i>Disease</i>	<i>Originally Notified</i>	<i>Removed to I. Hospital</i>	<i>Corrected Numbers</i>	<i>Deaths</i>
Scarlet Fever ...	34	22	34	—
Whooping Cough ...	20	1	20	—
A. Poliomyelitis				
Paralytic ...	8	8	8	1 (d. 13.1.51)
Non-Paralytic ...	5	5	5	—
Measles ...	365	6	365	1
Ac. Pneumonia ...	6	1	6	—
Dysentery ...	—	—	—	—
Smallpox ...	—	—	—	—
Ac. Encephalitis				
Infectious ...	—	—	—	—
Post-Infectious ...	—	—	—	—
Enteric or Typhoid Fever...	—	—	—	—
Erysipelas ...	9	—	9	—
Paratyphoid ...	—	—	—	—
Mening. Infection ...	1	1	1	—
Food Poisoning ...	1	1	1	—
P. Pyrexia ...	13	7	13	—
Diphtheria ...	1	1	—	—

The increased incidence of Poliomyelitis throughout the County was naturally a cause for concern, but the incidence in the Borough was not unduly heavy, there being only eight cases with paralysis. Unfortunately one subsequently proved fatal, as also did one case of measles, these being the only fatal cases of Infectious Disease.

For the third year in succession there was not a single case of Diphtheria.

ANNUAL REPORT
of the
CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR
For the Year 1950

To the Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses.

Mr. Mayor, Madam and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in submitting my annual report for the twelve months ending December 31st, 1950.

SUMMARY OF VISITS AND INSPECTIONS.

Housing and General Sanitary Work.

Houses inspected under the Public Health and Housing Acts	...	...	208
Re-inspections	...	...	207
Infectious diseases, in connection with	...	...	199
Factories...	...	...	62
Drainage, in connection with	...	...	305
Rodent control (excluding visits by rodent operator)	...	...	59
Public conveniences	...	...	14
Houses let in lodgings	...	...	20
Moveable dwellings	...	...	82
Stables, piggeries	...	...	8
Offensive trades	...	...	14
Smoke observations	...	...	39
Verminous premises	...	...	12
Common Lodging Houses	...	...	8
Refuse disposal, in connection with	...	...	33
Shops	...	...	11
Cinemas and places of entertainment	...	...	7
Schools	...	...	41
Interviews	...	...	285
Miscellaneous sanitary visits	...	...	149

Housing Repairs. It has not been possible to undertake any reconditioning of house property under Section 9 of the Housing Act, 1936. The ever rising costs of building work make it impossible to execute reconditioning work at a reasonable cost in relation to the fixed pre-war rentals. Essential repairs to houses are therefore dealt with under Section 92 of the Public Health Act, 1936. In this connection repairs were effected at 77 houses during the year.

Defence (General) Regulations, 1939. Twenty-nine houses which have been the subject of Clearance or Demolition Orders under the Housing Act, 1936, are occupied by powers conferred by these

Regulations. Occupation of such houses is permitted by licence granted by the Local Authority. The licences run for periods of 6 months, but are renewable, and restrictions on the rent to be charged, the number of occupants, and a clause regarding satisfactory maintenance of the houses is inserted. During the year two new licences were issued.

Complaints. During the year, 125 complaints were received at the Health Department. Of these, 53 had reference to housing conditions, 39 concerned drainage, and 33 were miscellaneous. All these complaints were investigated, and appropriate action taken.

Public Health Act, 1936—Section 24. During the year, 21 sewers were found to be choked, and were cleansed by the Corporation. Sewers dealt with under this Section are those that were maintainable by owners of property under previous Public Health Acts.

Rodent Control. The law with regard to this subject was re-enacted in the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949, and this Act came into operation on March 31st, 1950. Certain obligations are imposed on every Local Authority to secure as far as practicable that their district is kept free from rats and mice, viz:—

- (a) from time to time carry out such inspections as may be necessary for the purpose aforesaid.
- (b) destroy rats and mice on land of which they are the occupier.
- (c) enforce the duties of owners or occupiers of land, and to carry out such operations as are authorised.

To carry out the above functions one full-time Rodent Operator is employed, and during the year under review he has carried out the following work:—

Treatments at private dwellings	...	...	335
Treatments at business premises	...	...	54
Treatments at premises owned by the Local Authority	...	...	11
Visits on search work	...	...	831

The cost of treatments at business premises is charged in full to the occupiers. This is a requirement laid down for the Local Authority to qualify for grant aid. The premises of householders are treated free of charge.

Disinfection. Disinfection of premises and bedding after the removal of patients suffering from Tuberculosis, or after death, was carried out at 24 houses.

Vermin and Insect Pests. During the year treatments were carried out at 10 houses with satisfactory results for the eradication of various species of insect.

Offensive Trades. There are 7 offensive trades established within the Borough comprising a tannery, 2 hide and skin depots and 4 Rag and Bone Merchants. These businesses were conducted without nuisance.

Moveable Dwellings. There were 11 moveable dwellings within the Borough individually licensed for use and occupation, and three licensed sites. These have been satisfactorily used during the year.

Swimming Baths (St. James' Street) Water Sampling. During the year 36 samples of water from the Taunton Swimming Baths have been taken both at the inlet and the outlet. The results have shown the purification of the water to be entirely satisfactory.

FOOD INSPECTION.

Visits in connection with the inspection and supervision of food.

Slaughterhouses...	...	...	...	...	835
Foodshops	...	...	...	...	188
Food preparing premises	...	...	...	...	12
Dairies	...	...	...	...	98
Bakehouses	...	...	...	...	21
Ice cream premises	...	...	...	...	26
Restaurants	...	...	...	...	24

Milk Supply. There are 16 registered dairies and 20 registered distributors of milk operating within the Borough. Four of the distributors operate from premises outside the Borough. Fourteen of the local distributors hold licences to sell Tuberculin Tested Milk, and 5 hold licences to sell pasteurised milk. In addition, 3 of the distributors from outside the Borough hold Supplementary Licences to sell Tuberculin Tested and Pasteurised Milk.

There are 4 milk pasteurising plants within the Borough, but these are now controlled by the Somerset County Council as the Food and Drugs Authority for the area.

Tuberculin Tested Milk. During the year 35 samples of Tuberculin Tested Milk being sold within the Borough were submitted to the Bacteriologist for examination. Of these 31 were reported as being satisfactory, and 4 as unsatisfactory. All unsatisfactory reports are referred to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries for investigation.

Ice Cream. The registration of premises under the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, for the manufacture, storage and sale of ice cream are as follows:—

Manufacture and sale	9
Storage	1
Storage and sale	56

During the year 6 samples of ice cream were procured from manufacturers and submitted to the Public Health Laboratory. Testing of these samples was found to be impossible owing to failure of part of the process. Sampling was therefore discontinued for the remainder of the year.

FOOD INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED.

CANNED FOOD.

	<i>No. of tins</i>
Beetroot	67
Carrots	72
Corned Beef	161
Condensed Milk	198
Fruit	405
Fish Paste	207
Jam	75
Peas and Beans	194
Soup	145
Spaghetti	23
Tomatoes	35
Tomato Purée	2
Mixed Vegetables	14
Tinned Pork	14
Luncheon Meat	97
Tinned Bacon	1
Mincemeat	2
Grapefruit Juice	25
Beef Cereal	6
Gherkins... ..	3
Rabbit	7
Fish	102
Christmas Pudding	2
Irish Stew	4
Sausages	3
Tinned Ham	13
Tinned Fowl	4
Chicken	3
Pau-pau	6
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	1,892
	<hr/>

OTHER FOODS.

Bacon	46 lbs.
Cereals	42 „
Cheese	32 „
Custard	1 „
Dates	19 „
Flour	112 „
Game and Poultry	...	...	...	...	...	19 „
Macaroni	...	...	...	...	...	86 „
Meat Pies	...	...	...	...	...	16 „
Sausages	...	...	...	...	...	32 „
Semolina...	...	...	...	...	...	326 „
Wet Fish...	...	...	...	...	...	41 „
Boiling Fowls	...	...	...	...	...	118 „
Sultanas	...	...	...	...	...	122 „
Dried Fish	...	...	...	...	...	70 „
Brawn	...	...	...	...	...	12 „
Ham	...	...	...	...	...	67 „
Fruit	...	...	...	...	...	50 „
Sponge Mixture...	...	...	...	...	...	139 pkts.
Salad Cream	...	...	...	...	...	3 jars
Gherkins...	...	...	...	...	...	12 „
Ginger	...	...	...	...	...	1 „
Fruit	...	...	...	...	...	3 „

Meat Inspection. There are two slaughterhouses in use within the Borough, a Government Slaughterhouse and a Bacon Factory. The former supplies meat to Taunton Borough, Taunton Rural, Wellington Urban, Wellington Rural and Langport Rural Districts. In addition carcasses and offals are exported to London and other centres.

The following animals were slaughtered during the year:—

Beasts	...	...	...	...	...	2,157
Cows	...	...	...	...	...	1,057
Sheep and Lambs	...	...	...	...	...	12,955
Calves	...	...	...	...	...	762
Pigs	...	...	...	...	...	24,643

The inspection of the above carcasses revealed the disease as set out in the following table:—

	Cattle (excl. cows)	Cows	Calves	Sheep Lambs	Pigs
Number killed	2,157	1,057	762	12,955	24,643
Number inspected	2,157	1,057	762	5,300	24,643
Whole carcasses condemned from diseases other than T.B. ...	46		9	60	26
Carcasses from which some part or organ was condemned	2,267		7	713	845
Percentage of number inspected affected with disease other than T.B.	71.9%		2.1%	14.5%	3.5%
Tuberculosis Only.					
Whole carcasses condemned ...	43		—	—	59
Carcasses from which some part or organ was condemned	660		—	—	2,783
Percentage of number inspected affected with T.B.	21.8%		—	—	11.5%

In addition the following meat was condemned on butcher's premises on account of bone taint or other causes:—

Imported					
Beef					747 lbs.
Home Killed					
Mutton					16 lbs.
Beef					235 „

FACTORIES ACT, 1937.

1. INSPECTIONS for the purposes as to provisions as to health.

Premises	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers prosecuted
(1) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities ...	26	10	3	—
(2) Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority ...	152	51	8	—
(3) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises)	3	6	1	—
TOTAL	181	67	12	—

2. Cases in which DEFECTS were found.

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred		
			To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness	12	12	—	10	—
Overcrowding	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences—					
(a) Insufficient	3	1	—	2	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective	5	5	—	2	—
(c) Not separate for sexes	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to out-work)	7	6	—	3	—
TOTAL ...	27	24	—	17	—

OUTWORK (Sections 110 and 111).

Nature of Work		Section 110		Section 111	
		No. of out-workers in August list	No. of prosecutions for failure to supply lists	No. of instances of work in unwholesome premises	Notices served
Making of wearing apparel ...	448	—	—	—	—

I am,

Your obedient servant,

P. J. GOUGH,

Chief Sanitary Inspector.

